

Interview H0202 : with Taring, Jigme Sumten Wangpo Namgyal ['phreng ring, 'jig med sum rten dbang po rnam rgyal] and Sambo, Tenzin Thondrup [bsam pho, bstan 'dzin don grub], (India, 1992) : Part No. 2 of 7

Taring and Sambo were important aristocratic officials in the Tibetan government. They talk about the Lungshar and Trimön incidents and the Kyichog Kündü Party, and about Panda Raga's organization and the arrest of Gendün Chönphe. They also discuss the expulsion of Kunphe and Raga from Kalimpong to China. Then they discuss the history of the Gandre Trungji and Lönchen Shatra. The subjects also talk about how the golden stupa for the 13th Dalai Lama's remains was built and the condolence visit of the Guomintang official Huang Musong. They also talk about the renovation of Samye Monastery and the Regent's visit to Lake Lhamo Latsho.

(Mr. Sambo) I thought he was quite good and I admired Raga. Raga was a great admirer of Sun Yatsen and Chiang Kaishek and respected them as great servants of the people. So at that time, he was trying to establish an organization to bring some sort of revolution in Tibet. The funds for this organization were believed to have been given by the Guomintang and Chiang Kaishek's people. Although I did not know about it at the time, I learned of it later. As far as Raga was concerned, he liked the Chinese and even used to say that we are from the same nationality. But Raga did not like the English. At that time, although I myself thought that the Chinese and the Tibetans were not the same, I did not say anything to them. Later this organization came to light.

Q

How did this organization come to light? Raga was the main person who started the organization. Under him Kujar Künphe and Janglojen were working and Gendün Chönphe also came in, right?

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A

(Mr. Sambo) Yes, at that time Gendün Chönphe came to Kalimpong and was doing translation work. Gendün Chönphe was translating the sutra Dodzanglün [tib. mdo mdzangs blun] from the Kangyur.

Q

Was it really Dodzanglün, the Sutra of Wise and the Foolish?

A

(Mr. Sambo) Yes.

Q

Was it really Dodzanglün? Wasn't it the Blue Annals [tib. deb ther sngon po]?

A

(Mr. Sambo) Gendün Chönphe did the Blue Annals and this was Dodzanglün. [Note: No translation of Dodzanglün done by Gendün Chönphe was ever found. The Tibetan Library in Dharamsala published a translation of this sutra not long ago, but there was no mention of Gendün Chönphe's name in the book.] (Mr. Sambo) It was Gendün Chönphe who did the translation of Dodzanglün. He stayed in the Punjab for four or five years and then he returned to Kalimpong. So at about that time he met Raga. Raga's command over Tibetan language was excellent but Raga's handwriting was terribly bad. It was very hard to understand his handwriting. You had to think hard to get the meaning. So Raga and Gendün Chönphe came into contact. At about this time, they had already formed this organization. Then they decided to send Gendün Chönphe to Lhasa via Bhutan. The reason for sending Gendün Chönphe via Bhutan was to get a map of Bhutan, which was needed.

Q

Why did they need a map of Bhutan?

A

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(Mr. Sambo) According to my understanding, they wanted to hand it to the Guomindang and show the Chinese how British India had invaded [tib. btsan dbang] certain parts of Tibet and separated these parts from Tibet. With this objective in mind, they wanted a map of Bhutan and they sent Gendün Chönphel on this mission. When Gendün Chönphel arrived at Lhasa, he sent a letter by post directly to Abo Raga in Kalimpong at the address of Valley View House in Kalimpong. Gendün Chönphel, no doubt, was a learned person, but he tended to overlook certain minor matters of importance. He needed to be alerted constantly. Abo Raga normally avoided correspondences to his home address, but Gendün Chönphel overlooked this and sent the letter directly to his address from Lhasa. So Gendün Chönphel was not very politically clever, but was a scholar. At that time, Gendün Chönphel's letter passed through the hands of British Trade Agent at Gyantse, Mr. Richardson.

Q

At that time, Gendün Chönphel had reached Lhasa, right?

Q

(Mrs. Taring) He was coming to Lhasa and he couldn't write letters directly.

Q

Why? Did Raga asked him to do that?

A

(Mr. Sambo) No, Raga didn't ask him, but he sent a letter by post directly from Lhasa to Abo Raga in Kalimpong at the address of Valley View House in Kalimpong. Richardson at that time had received instructions from Sir Basil Gould, the Political Officer of Sikkim, to examine any correspondence addressed to Raga or Valley View. So when Richardson opened Gendün Chönphel's letter to Raga, he found the map of Bhutan. Sir Basil Gould had been watching the activities of Raga for quite some time. Sir Basil Gould had even asked me what Raga did for his livelihood and asked my opinion about him. Although Sir Basil Gould had suspicions about Raga's activities, he could not find proof of anything. But when Richardson found the map in Gendün Chönphel's letter, their suspicion was further aroused. So Richardson immediately reported this to Sir Basil Gould. Raga also had written often to Gendün Chönphel, but he always sent the letters through other persons.

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But Gendün Chönphe was too careless and sent the letter to Raga at the Valley View address in Kalimpong. This was Gendün Chönphe's fault. When Gendün Chönphe was arrested in Lhasa they found letters from Raga asking Gendün Chönphe who were the most powerful persons in Tibet these days and what and how much modern arms and ammunitions did Tibet have. These facts were revealed after the arrest of Gendün Chönphe.

[Note: Mr. Sambo is a great friend, student and follower of Gendün Chönphe. Later he acted as the sponsor of Gendün Chönphe, so his account of Gendün Chönphe's arrest and about the documents which they found in his possession must be true.]

So, Richardson reported this to the Kashag. The British government and the Tibetan government both knew of the existence of their organization and when they inquired into it, they heard that the organization was based in Tibet. The British government instigated the Tibetan government to destroy this organization in its infancy, otherwise it might create greater trouble later. The British government constantly urged the Kashag about this and so finally the Tibetan government arrested Gendün Chönphe. The charges leveled against him were that he produced fake hundred sang currency notes.

Q

It was also said that he tried to establish democracy [tib. mi ser rgyal khab]. Wasn't this the talks of that time?

A

(Mr. Sambo) Besides these, no incriminating documents were found.

Q

Nothing was found regarding the democracy, right?

A

(Mr. Sambo) Gendün Chönphe was definitely involved with the organization and the letters written to him by Raga were revealed in Tibet. When the British government came to know about Gendün Chönphe's letter with the map of Bhutan, they decided to raid the houses of Raga, Janglojen and Künphe in Kalimpong simultaneously. However, just before the British police came to raid Raga's house in Kalimpong, Raga received a message from the Calcutta Consulate General of the Guomindang government. The

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message informed Raga that the British are going to raid your house tomorrow. That particular letter from the Guomindang was found in his pocket when the British police came to raid his house.

Q

The people who came to raid the house saw the letter, right?

A

(Mr. Sambo) Yes, they saw the letter. [laughter] Immediately after receiving the message, Raga burnt the oath document [tib. gan rgya] of his organization which was signed and sealed by a lot of individuals and families. Since he burned the documents, the British government could not convict any other Tibetans, except the three of them, Janglojen, Künphel and Raga himself. After the raid, the British government ordered Raga to leave India within three days and Künphel within a week. So both left India and went to Nanjing, in China. One might have reached a day or two before the other, but both went to Nanjing.

Q

Janglojen Gung stayed for good because the Bhutanese Trashö [tib. drag shos] family saved him, right?

A

(Mr. Sambo) They raided his house also, but nothing was found.

(Mr. Taring) Janglojen Gung worked in the office of Sir Basil Gould, but not as a regular staff officer. He did a lot of translations. Even later it was said that Nehru's famous book of letters to his daughter was translated into Tibetan from English and the Tibetan portion was taken care of by Janglojen Gung.

[Note: In the Tibetan translation of Nehru's famous letters to his daughter, the translator who was named was Lhalungpa, Lobsang Phüntso [tib. lha lung pa blo bzang phun tshogs]

(Mrs. Taring) Whatever may be, he [Janglojen] was protected. [Janglojen] Gung's house was just raided, that is all.

Q

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You mean to say that the British Government in their documents indicated that Janglojen Gung had nothing to do with that, right?

A

(Mr. Sambo) It was something like that.

(Mrs. Taring) Yes, naturally they had to do this otherwise they would have had to deport him together with the others.

(Mr. Sambo) The reason why Bayetsang was whipped was because one telegram revealed the name of a Batsang something.

Q

Who sent the telegram?

A

(Mr. Sambo) Probably, the Sikkim Political Officer sent it. They could not understand much out of it, but probably it was confirmed that a Batsang something was involved. There was a family called Bayetsang and their son was arrested and was whipped.

(Mrs. Taring) He was arrested. The boy is still living in Tibet today. I remember that the boy had small eyes and normally was in an open shop in Lhasa.

Q

Did the Tibetan Government lash this boy?

A

Yes. It is said that he was lashed and put in the jail for a few months.

Q

Then what happened?

A

(Mr. Sambo) They released him as they could not establish anything. That is because Raga had been able to destroy the document that everybody had signed and sealed. And even Amchi Champa, the doctor who gave the medicine to the 13th Dalai Lama, was also involved in it and he was scared.

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Q

Did Dr. Champa get permission to come back?

A

(Mr. Sambo) Yes, I remember that Champa was back in Tibet. So this organization was destroyed and Künphel and Raga left for China because they had been told to leave India by the then British Indian Government.

(Mr. Taring) After the organization was revealed, Kujar had to go to China.

(Mrs. Taring) It probably was the 1940s. You talked about Kujar and Künphel staying [in exile] in Kongpo for 2-3 years but it could not be two to three years. It had to be a little more than that. I came to India in 1942 for Tessla's marriage with Rani Chöni Dorji [tib. chos nyid rdo rje] who later became the Prime Minister of Bhutan, Jigme Dorji [tib. 'jigs med rdo rje] and that was in 1942. At that time Künphel and Janglojen were still in Kalimpong. So it might have been that they stayed more than five or six years in Kongpo. They [the people there] didn't even notice that they had fled.

Q

Actually, there were there about 10 years between 1933-1942, so they might have stayed 4-5 years in Kongpo. What happened to the organization thereafter? Was it completely dismantled [tib. sbo lug]?

A

(Mr. Sambo) Since the document on which they had signed their names could not be found, there wasn't anything to dismantle.

Q

The organization scattered, right?

A

(Mr. Sambo) Yes, it kind of scattered as no one was continuing to work. Among them, the most victimized was Gendün Chönphe because Künphel and Raga went to Nanjing in China and gradually Künphel was allowed to come back to Tibet. A petition to allow Künphel and Janglojen to return was given to the Tibetan Government, but these

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applications were never put up to the Regent by the Kashag. So the Kashag did not send up the applications to the Regent and the Regent was quite helpless at that time. Just after the war ended in China in 1946, the communist took over in 1946-1947 and then permission for Künphel to return to Lhasa was granted and Janglojen also was granted permission to return to Lhasa. So in 1950, both Künphel and Janglojen were in Lhasa. Abo Raga [Pandatsang family] also petitioned to be allowed to come, and Pandatsang [in Lhasa] might have done something to enable him also to come. So all of them were in Lhasa in 1950.

(Mrs. Taring) Raga didn't stay long in Lhasa.

(Mr. Sambo) He was in Chamdo in 1950 when the Chinese came.

Q

Then what happened to Janglojen and Künphel? Did they remain in the same positions? For example, Janglojen Gung's title was Gung, so did he remain a Gung?

A

(Mr. Sambo) No, he did not continue to be a gung. In 1951-1952, Janglojen Gung was delegated to work in the Granary Office [tib. bru khang las khungs] in Tibet.

[Note: This was a new office established when the Chinese came to Lhasa. Kujar Künphel and Janglojen were the supervisors of this office [tib. do dam pa]. This office was located in the New Palace [Phodrang Sarpa] in 1950-1951. The New Palace was the house occupied by Taktra when he was the Regent.]

(Mr. Sambo) At that time Kujar, Janglojen, Kapshöba and Pomsur [tib. spom zur] were placed in charge of the Granary Office. In 1952, Janglojen and Kapshöba enjoyed the rank of theiji and Kujar and Pomsur the rank of rimshi.

Q

I remember seeing Kujar with double tassels on his horse. This was after the Chinese came, right?

A

(Mrs. Taring) This was after the Chinese.

Q

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Now going back to the main question, to (Mrs. Taring), You know that Trimön ran away to Drepung. Did you hear about that?

A

(Mrs. Taring) Yes, Trimön ran away to Drepung and he went a little crazy and wore a shamtab dress.

Q

Wearing the white shamtab was later on.

A

(Mrs. Taring) When did that happen? Did he go to Drepung before that?

Q

I heard that just before Lungshar's misfortune, Trimön ran away to Drepung. I heard that Trimön went to Drepung, but I do not know about it very clearly. There might be doubts about him and so he must have gone thinking that there would be trouble if something went wrong. Let's go back to the main point. When Lungshar established the Kyichog Kündü [tib. skyid phyogs kun 'dus] was Janglojen already present?

A

(Mrs. Taring) Yes. When Lungshar established the Kyichog Kündü Party so many people had put their seals on it. Our kungö and Dingja [tib. lding bya] normally sought the advice of Tsarong, but he was not there at that time and so we did not know what to do. But we were lucky we did not put our seals there. But a lot of people insisted to us that we should go and put our seals on it [the party document] because so many people had already put on their seals. So you had to go and do it. I do remember Kyibug [tib. skyid sbug] brother and Ragashag Sawangchemmo put their seals on it.

Q

Even if you put your seal you really wouldn't get punished much unless you were deeply involved, right?

A

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(Mr. Taring) No, not much.

(Mrs. Taring) No. Many of the people who were involved were prosecuted, while others were let off with small punishments.

(Mr. Sambo) Even Gadrang [tib. dga' brang] Sawangchenmo had to pay some gold coins as a punishment for his involvement.

Q

To go back to the starting point, when Lungshar first established his organization, did he really think he would be able to function like the Lönchen Shatra [tib. blon chen bshad sgra] did when he set up the so called Gandre Trungji [tib. dga' 'bras drung spyi]? Probably, at that time the Regent was Tshomönling [tib. tshe smon gling] or the former famous Reting called Thubten something.

A

(Mr. Sambo) Maybe it was Ditrug.

Q

It couldn't be because Ditrug is from Sera.

A

(Mrs. Taring) What does it mean in the way Lönchen Shatra functioned with the Gandre Trungji?

Q

Let me put it this way, when Lönchen Shatra took over, he was disgraced and exiled to Tö.

A

(Mr. Sambo) No, he was banished to Nyemo [tib. snye mo].

Q

At that time the man called Ganden Naring [tib. dga' ldan sna ring], a famous man from Ganden, went to Shatra, and went up and down. Shatra shaved his head pretending to be a monk and they sent letters up and down in snuff boxes and in grease, in things like that.

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Finally Shatra came out of exile with a shaved head and suddenly came to Lhasa. When he reached Drepung, the monks of the monastery welcomed him in a great procession. At that time, the Dalai Lama was young and the kujar and the Dalai Lama's personal attendants sent tea from the Dalai Lama's chamber to Shatra when he stopped at Gyetse Lubding. [This is one of the parks just opposite to Norbulinga]. He was not a Lönchen at that time just an ordinary man. Suddenly, thereafter he went straight to the Jokhang and he established his headquarters in the Jokhang itself instead of going to his house. His relations and others joined him there and from there he sent the letter of invitation to all the government officers saying whether or not they would like to join with him giving them a certain time as the deadline. He asked everybody to join thus giving them an opportunity to join him. Finally, everybody except two Sawang and the Regent joined him.

A

(Mr. Sambo) At that time, one Sawang was our late grandfather and the other Sawang was Kyitö [tib. skyid stod] who remained neutral.

Q

Thereafter, he established an organization called Gandre Trungji which consisted of Ganden, Drepung, and the monk and lay officials all together, and then started issuing edicts from there. They cancelled the [power of] the Kashag and the Regent who didn't have anything to do. Finally, then Lönchen Shatra gave himself the title of Desi [tib. sde srid] [which is Prime Minister] and started issuing edicts and making decisions from the Jokhang in Lhasa. Even the trungja was established in the Jokhang and not at the Potala, and so Shatra finally sent soldiers and sent the Kashag and Regent into exile or into prison. So I said that do you consider Lungshar was following the footstep of Shatra in establishing a powerful organization which like Shatra had done would take over. Do you think Lungshar was trying to do the same thing, but failed?

A

(Mr. Taring) I think the goal of the Kyichog Kündü was political and probably was not for his personal gain.

Q

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It is important to know whether Lungshar had the aim of helping the Tibetan people or doing something for the welfare and benefit of the people, sort of a democratic system or whether it was just that he wanted to get the power for himself. As you remember, first he had said that Langdün, the Prime Minister, was too young and it was necessary to have two experienced monk and lay officials to join hands with him. Such talk was made in the Tsondu. We had so many problems that finally it was decided that one lama should go. Then when the lama was going [to be appointed] then Lungshar did not have a chance to go. So now he had no other alternative, so it was with this aim that he should go and be the most important man. So for that purpose did he establish this party or was it really for the benefit of the people and the establishment of democracy that he had thought of this. This is a very important issue and so I would like to have your views on this?

A

(Mrs. Taring) This is very important and I do not know really unless Mr. Sambo has something to say. Mr. Taring and I cannot say anything because we do not know.

Q

It is not important that you have to make a decision. Whatever you say is not going to be a final decision, so I want your thoughts. I mean your ideas on it.

A

(Mr. Taring) It is important that Lungshar went to England to take the four Tibetan students there including Möndrong [tib. smon grong] and Ringang [tib. rin sgang] and Gokhara [tib. sgog mkhar ba] and Kyibuk.

Q

When you say Kyibuk, was that Kyibuk Chola (brother)?

A

(Mr. Taring) It was Kyibuk Chola. Both Lungshar and his wife went to England. Their interpreter was Lengden [tib. legs ldan] Dzasa. Therefore Lungshar had a broad idea of the west and because of that he might have had such thoughts. This is my thinking now.

(Mrs. Taring) This is important. But we cannot say what it really was.

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Q

As I said earlier, we are not here to make decisions, just to express our thoughts. So I would like to have your views. Now I would like to have Mrs. Taring's view.

A

(Mrs. Taring) Well in my view, as Mr. Taring had just mentioned, Lungshar's had the goal of changing the society into a good system. This is what I think.

(Mr. Taring) Lungshar went abroad so he had more experience and an enlarged viewpoint, and because of these things he could have been influenced. It could be both he liked to change the society and he would like to have the power for himself. So both could come together.

(Mrs. Taring) I think the same thing. It was necessary for Lungshar to be powerful so he would automatically have such a desire and also he would like to change the society. Basically, Lungshar would have as his aim changing the society. He saw most of our people were uneducated so even if he wanted to change the society, it was necessary for him to be powerful. Otherwise it was not at all possible to change the society. We would refuse to be changed. Because of this, we have lost to the Chinese and so forth.

(Mr. Taring) Take the example of Tsarong Shape who wanted to change the Tibetan society very much. This is well known. But Tsarong was not allowed to work because he was too much for changing the society and so people stopped him.

(Mrs. Taring) Tsarong had no desire for individual ambition at all. His aim was basically to change Tibetan society towards a democratic system but nobody could understand it and I know that very well. As far as Lungshar was concerned, I did not have close relations with him so I cannot say exactly in the same way that I can say about Tsarong. However, Lungshar was well educated and his way of thinking shows that he wanted to change Tibetan society and for this it was necessary for him to be powerful as the head of the powerful organization. If he was not, then his desire for change would not take place. There was really no one he could have pushed up to do the work. The few educated people available were his enemies and so it was necessary for him to be head of the government too.

(Mr. Taring) So if he became the head, he could manage.

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(Mr. Sambo) I also feel the same way. Before he established this organization called Kyichog Kündü. Lungshar used to say that the kings of France, the German kings and the Italian kings were all driven out [tib. phud pa red].

Q

What did he mean?

A

(Mr. Sambo) The meaning was that there was no place for the kings anymore because they were driven out. We only came to know that. We have not been taught what happened to Italy and France. Maybe it was not time for him to speak, or he might not have heard, or I do not know. They used to understand it that way. Basically Lungshar spent three years in London. He took Jangöpa, Möndrong, Gokhara and Kyibuk to England.

He stayed there and acted as their foster parent; as someone to whom those young kids could come and talk to; it was something like that. So for that reason both Lungshar and his wife went together. At the time Lungshar and his wife went to England, his wife was pregnant. The child, Lhalu, was born in Darjeeling. Lungshar somehow understood that if his wife gave birth to the child in London, the child would be blond, so he left very quickly [to avoid this]. This is true. That child is Lhalu Sawangchemmo. I talked with Lhalu Sawangchemmo in Chinese prison and Lhalu also felt that his parents felt that due to the change of water and environment if they had a child in London the child would be blonde and blue-eyed. If such a child was born, it would be very difficult to show to people in future. So, therefore the parents decided that they must go back as soon as possible before giving birth to the child. So therefore Lungshar sent a petition to the Tibetan Government asking that he be allowed to return. When he did not get a reply to his request, they came to Mumbai by ship. They did not stay even a few days in Mumbai, but they quickly ran to Darjeeling and gave birth to Lhalu Sawangchemmo in Darjeeling. After this he did not return to England. Before going to Central Tibet, he took leave to go to his estate and say prayers to the protector deities of the estate. So that is the normal system of the Tibetan Government (tib. Shikor Lhasol [gzhis skor lha gsol]).

(Mr. Taring) How come Lungshar had fears of having a blonde child?

(Mrs. Taring) They thought because of the change in environment and water. That is why he thought he was going to have a blonde child. It was not that he did not trust his wife.

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Q

Actually it was a misunderstanding. Somebody told them if a child is born in England he will be an Englishman which meant he would be an English citizen. They misunderstood that to mean that a child is born in England he will have blonde hair and blue eyes. That is what happened.

A

(Mr. Sambo) This is actually true.

Q

Now going back to the main question, regarding the building of the stupa for the 13th Dalai Lama and its expenditures, etc., what was the real cost of the stupa for the 13th Dalai Lama that was named Gelek Dojo [tib. dge legs 'dod 'jo]?

A

(Mr. Taring) The expenditure involved for this was nothing that can be counted. It cannot be counted. It was beyond imagination. There were a tremendous amount of donations given by the people, and on top of this, the government spent lot of money and used a lot of precious jewels.

Q

Even the donations were not ordinary donations. They were very expensive and large sums of money. What was the budget?

A

(Mr. Taring) There was no budget. Whatever they needed they spent.

Q

When you finished the stupa completely, did anybody calculate how much it cost and what was it worth in terms of money? And what kind of precious stone did they used, diamonds?

A

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(Mr. Taring) There was no such thing. Naturally there were a huge amount of precious stones like diamonds and sapphires, etc. coming from the government treasury and also donated by people. No one kept any accounts of the money they spent. It was what we call in Tibetan, Bumpa Silu [tib. bum pa sib blug]--whatever comes in is immediately drawn out.

(Mrs. Taring) At that time, the government might have taken out whatever it had in the Dzöbu Treasury?

Q

They would not take out everything from the government storehouses [tib. bkar 'jug].

A

(Mrs. Taring) I think for the stupa of the 13th Dalai Lama they might have taken it all out.

(Mr. Sambo) There was no custom of having a budget.

Q

They might have used whatever jewels they needed, right?

A

(Mr. Sambo) Yes. Of course there must be a lot of precious and semi-precious stones and diamonds. However, what I do remember was that at the feet of the vase on the stupa, rather above the lotus seat, I saw that in the center there was a one inch high pearl. It was a huge pearl that looked like an egg. I have never seen such a big pearl. I used to think about that. The height of that stupa was about 15 to 20 meters.

Q

Did they have a catalog for the stupa?

A

(Mr. Sambo) Probably, they had one.

(Mr. Taring) There must be a list of the materials that were used.

(Mrs. Taring) Anyway, it became priceless.

Q

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I have heard the general measurement for this particular stupa came from Nepal and was in the hands of the Tsechu Trülku [tib. tshes bcu sprul sku] who was sometimes known as Drugpa Lama [tib. 'brug pa bla ma]. To continue with the question, did the Guomindang or the Chinese send anybody when Dalai Lama died to make offerings?

A

(Mr. Taring) The Guomindang sent their representatives.

Q

What name did they have?

A

(Mr. Taring) They sent their representatives in order to represent the Guomindang Government and to make offerings for the 13th Dalai Lama. Besides, it was not only the Guomindang it was the Chinese representative because the Guomindang controlled China at that time. I do remember very clearly now that it was that head of the Chinese delegation who was known as Huang Musong. He came in a palanquin carried by mules [tib. drel byams]. Also quite a number of the delegation came in palanquins. So we went and watched them and among them quite a number of old men were there. One of those old men died. These people came by overland through the Kham.

(Mrs. Taring) They came by sea through India.

(Mr. Taring) They came by road and stayed in the old Pandatsang House.

Q

How many were there?

A

(Mr. Taring) The officers, the representative and his staff members were 20. They also had their bodyguards, so all together there were about 50.

Q

What rank did this Huang Musong enjoy in China?

A

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(Mr. Sambo) I do not know. I do not remember anyone saying what rank he enjoyed.

Q

What happened when they came?

A

(Mr. Taring) They fixed a date and they had a special ceremony in the Potala. This ceremony was not held in the normal hall where the ceremonies were held, but was held at the west side where there was a big hall where there were lot of multicolored prints on the walls and pillars.

Q

What kind of ceremony was held?

A

(Mr. Taring) It was the usual ceremony, but each one of those was attended by the Regent Reting and the prime minister Langdün together with all the shape and other government officials. So they offered what we call Tenche [tib. rten chas]. They made the offering. Even the throne of the Dalai Lama was put up and they put up his clothes and then the whole Chinese delegation including the bodyguards and soldiers carrying gifts in their hands came and these were accepted in front of the Dalai Lama's throne by one of attendants.

Q

What did we do? I mean, how did the Tibet Government's officials behave. Were they sitting down or standing up?

A

(Mr. Taring) I remember that the Regent Reting and prime minister sat on thrones and the shape and everybody below them was standing up when the Chinese came in lines. So they accepted those gifts and then the normal tea ceremony. This was sort of normal. Thereafter the Chinese delegation went to Drepung, Ganden and Sera Monasteries and distributed alms to the monks and also gave offerings at the Mönlam Prayer Festival. They

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probably gave one dayan to each monk. At that time one dayan was quite expensive. They distributed it to every monk at the Mönlam festival.

Q

Were they really there to make the offerings for the late Dalai Lama or what?

A

(Mr. Taring) They were the Chinese Government's representatives to make offerings for the late Dalai Lama. They stayed quite a long time in Lhasa and left some office to be continued thereafter. Before that, there was no Chinese office at all. Before that Chinese traders came to do business with the local people but as far as the governmental level was concerned, there was not a single Chinese officer living in Lhasa at that time. So for thirty or forty years there were no Chinese officers in Lhasa at all. During that period, Tibet remained free. There was no Chinese connection at all and whatever may be the activity in greater Tibet or anywhere, there was no discussion done or anything done or no connection with the Chinese Government at all for the previous thirty or forty years. I was young and I had become a Tibetan Government servant at that time. Until 1950 we remained in that situation. Then Huang Musong and these Chinese returned. So when Huang Musong returned he left one officer at Lhasa. He was a short fellow and he stayed at Kytöpa.

Q

Wasn't he called Shen something?

A

(Mr. Taring) He had one interpreter brought from Kalimpong called Trawangla [tib. bkra dbang lags]. After that, the Chinese [representative] called Zhang something remained in Tibet until 1948 when they threw all these Guomindang Chinese out of Tibet. They had a wireless station set and this was almost the first wireless set in Tibet. At that time and they stayed in the house around the courtyard of Sambo. So they used to invite all the Tibetan government officers just to show the wireless set, not to see like a television, but they could hear and talk. So that was why they used to invite everybody to listen to the wireless set. The wireless set was in the Sambo House which was very close to Kytöpa. It

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was next door. So they used to have the office at Kyitöpa and later they moved to Nordzin Gyentsen [tib. nor 'dzin rgyal mtshan].

(Mr. Sambo) They spent quite a number of years in our house; probably seven or eight years and then they moved down to the Nordzin Gyentsen House.

Q

What work did Huang Musong do in Lhasa?

A

(Mr. Taring) His main work was to build a connection. He even insisted on attending Tibetan ceremonies and government functions like the New Year's ceremony, etc. When they insisted to come, our government could not tell them not to attend. So this was happening. They had to build a political connection with the Tibetan leaders. So that was their major activity.

Q

Did they remain as foreigners when they came to these functions?

A

(Mr. Taring) They did not go to the foreign office. The Tibet Government asked them to contact the foreign office, but they said that we would like to contact the Kashag - so sometimes they used to go to the Kashag and sometimes the foreign office. They went to both offices. I remember that there was quite a short Chinese fellow who was short-tempered. When he was upset he used to cry to officials.

Q

Why did he cry in the Kashag?

A

I remember I went to Kashag and heard him cry one time. I do not remember what really happened. I do not remember the name of that Chinese man.

Q

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Was he the one called Sheng something who had trouble with the Lhasa police when he tried to bang on the door of Norbulinga. He was then sent back and was replaced by Shen quzhang who must have been the last one?

A

(Mr. Taring) Probably. They came to make offerings for the late Dalai Lama and then remained till 1949 or 1948 when we decided to throw out all the Chinese. So that means that they kept on staying there and tried to build some individual or maybe governmental connections by sort of inviting people for meals, sending gifts and being invited for dinners, etc. I did that sort of things but not so many people invited them for picnics or anything, except a few were by the Kashag. These people were invited by the Kashag for picnics. I do remember that they took photographs. In one photograph, the late Tsarong Shape sort of walked away and showing the back. We remember seeing such a photograph. They used to come and take photos.

Q

What did people say at that time? To those people did they say they are the China's representatives or the Guomindang's?

A

(Mrs. Taring) Naturally they were China's representative since at that time the Guomindang government was in control of the China. And at about that time, we used to have some radio broadcasts from the Ba [tib. 'ba'] area towards Lhasa. I remember they were talking a sort of local dialect and they were not clear. They could not speak well and sort of always said, "What should I say" [tib. ga re zer dgos red]. So in other words, the broadcast was not clear and the men did not know the language properly. We received such a broadcast in Lhasa.

(Mr. Sambo) This was the son of Yigyur, who was the man who was the yigyur [translator] during the 13th Dalai Lama's period. Probably Yigyur's mother was a Tibetan and maybe distantly related to the Tsarong family. They used to keep on saying their son used to speak from the Ba area. The radio broadcast was toward Tibet.

(Mrs. Taring) I do remember we listened very carefully and we came to know that it was the son of Yigyur. That Yigyur used to be quite a favorite of the 13th Dalai Lama and the son of the Yigyur was probably known as Ma Yugui. So later he was sent to school in

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China and from there he got this job. But he could not speak properly and we understood nothing. What should I say, he must have been just passing the time.

Q

What were they really saying?

A

(Mr. Taring) They were supposed to be giving news of events, etc. It came on around eight o'clock.

Q

Was it a daily broadcast?

A

(Mr. Taring) Yes. It was a daily broadcast only for ten or fifteen minutes. There was no music or anything of that sort except for speaking in Tibetan. He sort of tried to pass the time by speaking some words for 10 or 15 minutes.

(Mrs. Taring) Do you remember that boy?

Q

India also sent representatives. The British in India sent representative to make offering for the death of the 13th Dalai Lama. It was attended by Rai Bhadur and Richardson.

A

(Mr. Taring) The British office was left there since the Younghusband expedition. Richardson came later.

(Mrs. Taring) Sir Basil Gould came twice to Lhasa. The second time he came, Rai Bhadur and Richardson stayed.

It was in 1939 when the present Dalai Lama came--October 25, 1939. The year I was born he arrived in Lhasa. So at that time Sir Basil Gould, Richardson and Rai Bhadur came and then Richardson and Rai Bhadur stayed.

Q

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I apologize. We have gotten mixed up. We have to go back. Let me put out the question of what was the Pandatsang revolt--how did it happen and in which year?

A

(Mr. Sambo) It was probably in the Water-Bird Year, 1933. The Dalai Lama died in the 10th month and probably Pandatsang revolted in his area in the 11th month. We came to know about this in Lhasa around Tibetan New Year.

Q

Why did the Panda revolt take place? What did they want?

A

(Mr. Sambo) In Pandatsang there was Abo Nyima who was quite a favorite of the late Dalai Lama. He was probably the uncle of Yamphel [tib. yar 'phel] and Tobgye [tib. stob rgyas].

(Mrs. Taring) He was not the uncle of Yamphel and Tobgye. He was their elder brother. He was the eldest son of Abo Nichang.

(Mr. Sambo) Whether he was uncle or elder brother, they were quite close relatives. At that time Tobgye enjoyed the rank of letsenpa [tib. las tshan pa].

Q

How come a rupön was a letsenpa?

A

(Mr. Sambo) Rupön was a very junior post. However, in the outer post system, the rupön enjoyed the 5th rank. In the inner post side, they did not enjoy anything, but in the outside system, they enjoyed the 5th rank (letsenpa). So Tobgye was given the rank of letsenpa and was sent out to his post in Mankham [tib. smar khams]. At about this time, the 13th Dalai Lama passed away and some interesting things happening in Lhasa. So they also heard that Abo Nyima's eldest son was arrested by the Tibet government in Lhasa. During that period, Gen Lame [tib. rgan bla med] was also put in prison.

Q

What was Gen Lame involved in?

A

(Mr. Sambo) I do not remember clearly what it was for. But anyway, what happened was that Panda then decided to revolt against the Tibetan Government. That was while he was the rupön. It was when he heard that the Dalai Lama died and Künphel was sent away to exile, etc., and also that his own brother who was close to the Dalai Lama had been arrested. So he was worried when he heard this and then Tobgye further heard that his own brother had been arrested. At that time, communications were very poor so Tobgye really did not have time to check what really happened to his brother. So what he did was to invite two monks to pray to the protector deities for about seven days and then finally he rolled the senriy lottery. He asked the protector deity whether his brother Nyima was in trouble or was he alright. It came out that he was in trouble. So Tobgye decided to revolt.

Then suddenly one night he attacked depön Nornang--of either the Jadang or Nyadang Regiment. That Nornang was the father of the present Nornang. Overnight, Tobgye took over Nornang's regiment and took away all its weapons, killing the soldiers. Luckily depön Nornang was away from the regiment at that time. So when he took over the camp of this regiment, he also took over a government office, either it was the tea tax collector (tib. Jasho [ja sho]) or the salt tax collector (tib. Tsasho [tshwa sho]). The official who was there was Thupten Sangbo [tib. thub bstan bsang po]. He was also called Tsadora khenjung [tib. tsha rdor ba] who today lives in Mussoorie. They took over and they also dragged me along with them. Finally I came to know that the Tobgye had decided to gradually let Thupten Sangbo go. Thupten Sangbo somehow had a good connection with his guard and was able to escape, but in reality Panda Tobgye decided to let him go so told his guard to let him escape. This was what happened.

Q

Where was this taking place and where was Panda based?

A

(Mr. Sambo) Panda was based in Markham and Tobgye was sent there as a rupön of the regiment there. So Thupten Sangbo, the chap now in Mussoorie, was kept only for a few days and finally reached Chamdo.

Q

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Who was the Doji in Chamdo at that time?

A

(Mrs. Taring) Probably, it was Lobsang Palden [tib. blo bzang dpal ldan] with Sursur Dzasa.

(Mr. Sambo) It was shortly after Reting took over, so the Doji should have been Trenthong [tib. bkras mthong]. The Doji sent a messenger to Lhasa and told how Tobgye took over the Nornang regiment. Probably Nornang was out of station at that time. So when he was returning from where he had gone, there was no place for him to return, so he had to go to Chamdo. When a messenger was sent to Lhasa with the information that Tobgye had taken over Nornang's regiment, the [main] Kalön happened to be Trimön, who at that time was already having a major problem with Lungshar's Kyichog Kündü organization.

Q

Was it before this? Lungshar was also there.

A

(Mr. Sambo) Lungshar was there. The moment they received this information the government decided to seal the house of Pandatsang in Lhasa and they sent people to do this. At the same time, Panda also worried because the Dalai Lama had already died and Künphel had been exiled and actually the situation was intense, so Panda was alert as to what was going to happen to him. So this occurred at the time that he was on alert. So when the people came to seal his house, he heard about this and saw lot of people coming to seal his house so he closed/locked the main gate to his courtyard and did not let the government officers enter. Probably the Trungtsi officials were there. At that time, the Panda family in Lhasa had no knowledge of what their brother Tobgye had done in their home area. When they closed the main gate, the Trungtsi and others who were going to seal their property could not enter. Panda then asked why are you coming and what has happened? They replied that your brother Tobgye has revolted against the government and is taking over the whole regiment of Nornang. So we have decided to seal your property in Lhasa.

Q

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If they closed the doors, how did they talk?

A

(Mr. Sambo) Probably they talked through the window or something. At the time when they closed the door, Pandatsang said that Tobgye would not do such a thing, but Tobgye is one of owners of this house so if he has done this, even if he is able to escape, we will all be in trouble. Since the government is claiming he did this, we cannot say he would not do such thing since unless he had done it, the government would not have told us and would not have taken action like this. Consequently, we think that he might have done it. Anyway, we would like to return all the government's weapons or other things he took. If you permit us, we would like to send one of our own men to see Tobgye and the situation firsthand and try to return the government property that Tobgye has taken. At the same time they were doing whatever they could. For instance Göshampa [tib. rgod gsham pa] and other family friends of Pandatsang were acting as mediators. For a few days the main door of the house was closed and the police and the government people who had come to seal the house were standing outside since they could not get in. No one went in or out. So it remained like that for a few days while the go between and friends were going around and talking.

Q

When they closed the gate door and when people could not go in and out how, did the friends go around. Was it officially arranged or what did they do?

A

(Mr. Sambo) There were quite a number of shops attached to Pandatsang's house at the back, and there was one shop which belonged to Jola Tsewang [tib. jo lags tshe dbang] [a government clerk]. There was a secret door in this shop from the main Pandatsang house so they had been using that door. Probably it was Göshampa and Gendak Ugyen la [tib. rgan dag o rgyan lags] who were traveling around and trying to help Pandatsang. So finally Pandatsang said that he would like to return all the government property including the weapons, and would advise Tobgye not to engage in such actions. So finally the government agreed that they would wait and allow the family to go down there [to Kham]. So then there was a man called Changling Jola Tsenor [tib. byang gling jo lags tshe nor] who was a monk. He went riding a mule and taking an extra mule so that he could change

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it and he reached Chamdo within seven days. From Chamdo, he contacted the Doji and finally was able to reach Tobgye in Kham. When he met Tobgye, he asked him have you have done this. Tobgye explained to him that he heard that his brother had been arrested and not only that, but we did prayers and even did a senriy lottery which showed that his brother was in trouble. So he said he decided he could not wait any longer and had taken that action. So they advised him not to do such things anymore. He might be able to escape, but the Pandatsang people in Lhasa would suffer. He finally he agreed. Then Gelongla [tib. dge slong lags] or the emissary of Pandatsang returned to Lhasa and they repaid about 500 guns and two or three machine guns.

Q

What happened to Tobgye? Was he excused?

A

(Mr. Sambo) More or less, Tobgye was able to escape. However Tobgye could not stay in Markham anymore and ran away to Chinese occupied territory. So Tobgye could not stay in Markham and ran away to an area called Pokok [part of Batang] which was under Chinese occupation although the people were Tibetans and the area was Tibetan. It was in the Chinese occupied area [of Kham] so the Tibetan Government did not have control over it. So Tobgye was not allowed to return to Tibetan areas until 1949 or 1950. In 1950, the government revoked the order and Tobgye was allowed to return to Tibetan areas.

(Mr. Taring) Because of Tobgye's action, the government decided to seal the property of Panda in Lhasa. About that time when they closed their door, somebody's gun went off and maybe killed a horse in their house. I heard this but do not remember exactly how it happened.

(Mr. Sambo) It was not like that. When Panda was sending his emissary outside to work and when they were not getting a definite answer, at that time Panda thought that it is not wise to remain like this so he took out all his weapons and distributed them among his servants. There were about 20 to 30 people/servants so he distributed the guns among his Khamba servants. His idea was to suddenly shoot a few guns and then run off to the Kham area.

Q

If they wanted to run, they didn't have to run like this since they had the secret door?

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A

(Mr. Sambo) Well, he said that only two or three can go through the secret door. Many people could not go, and not only that, the person who had that secret door - the shop keeper-- would be in great trouble. So they decided not to do it that way. At that time, the most prominent Panda family member was Yamphel. At that time, one of the servants who did not know how to handle a gun mistakenly fired it. The bullet went into the stable and hit the horse which Yamphel himself used to ride. By that time, the Panda people had already saddled their horses and were ready to go. Before this gun misfired, the police were already using ladders to climb up to Panda house and they were trying to enter the house through the windows, but when they heard the gunshot, the police ran away. In this way they got more time which enabled the emissaries to have a conversation with the government which said that if they could settle the issue among themselves, then they may be allowed to leave. Still they had to have someone, a monastery to which they had an affiliation, etc. to stand as their guarantor. Some individuals and monasteries gave guarantees for Pandatsang.

(Mrs. Taring) At such time the monasteries were very helpful. For instance, when my father was in trouble, we were protected by Drepung Monastery. A few khamtsen in Drepung and the Upper Tantric College (gyutö) also helped us.

(Mr. Sambo) The Government's decision on the Panda issue was that the Panda family members in Lhasa will have no trouble if they return all the weapons in cash or kind, and also a huge sum in monetary fines. Tobgye also was not allowed to enter Lhasa.

Q

At that time, Trimön must have been the most important person?

A

(Mr. Sambo) Once later during a talk with Yamphel, he told me that it was his good luck that at that time Trimön was too preoccupied with the Kyichog Kündü trouble. Kyichog Kündü at that time was functioning with great strength and it was posing a danger to Trimön, so Trimön was not in a position to tackle any more trouble. So that was why he let Yamphel off. Because of that situation, he said he was able to escape [punishment].

(Mrs. Taring) What did Shakabpa write about this in his book, because Trimön was his maternal uncle?

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(Mr. Sambo) Shakabpa might have taken the Panda episode as not very important. So I think Shakabpa may not have written much about it.

(Mrs. Taring) I think Shakabpa wrote about the Kyichog Kündü in his book, right?

(Mr. Sambo) I have not seen anything on it by Shakabpa. So, I think probably he did not write anything about it.

(Mrs. Taring) Probably he thought it was not very significant. Therefore, he might not have written about it and ignored it.

(Mrs. Taring) This was one of the important events in the Tibetan history, but probably Shakabpa chose to ignore it.

(Mr. Sambo) I heard Shakabpa had not written anything about the Reting trouble, but when I read the book recently, I saw that Shakabpa had mentioned something about it. He had written something about Reting like the summoning of Reting to the Tsondu gyendzom and Reting's confessions, etc. were in his book. He could not write more than that, because if he wrote more than that, it would become a document which would not be read by anyone.

Q

The political party established by Lungshar called Kyichog Kündü and the other one established by Abo Raga were quite important. Many people do not know about these. Quite a number of people only know that Gendün Chömphele was arrested, lashed and put in prison, but beyond that people do not know much about what happened. I think these were important.

A

(Mrs. Taring) It was quite important. Mr. Sambo, especially, had a very close relationship with the Pandatsang family. Sambo's first wife was Pandatsang's daughter or Panda Yamphel's sister. Sambo later married Taring's daughter, Tsekyi. So because of his close relationship with the Panda family, he knows all the details about these incidents.

Q

The only person among the government officers who was affected by the Panda trouble was Thupten Sangbo, right?

A

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M. Sambo: Yes, yes. Except for him, no one was affected much. Thupten Sangbo was either the Tsasho or a dzong head at the time.

Q

(Mrs. Taring) Why did they arrest Thupten Sangbo? Where was he then?

A

(Mr. Taring) At that time, he was on the staff of Nornang.

(Mr. Sambo) He was either the Tsasho or the dzong head at the time. When they arrested Thupten Sangbo, they tied his hands behind his back and tied him to a mule, although they did not let the mule run. The behavior of one of the men who was posted to watch Thupten Sangbo convinced him that he was definitely pro-government. So, while Thupten Sangbo was still in Panda's custody, the man who was appointed to watch him told Thupten Sangbo that you are definitely from a high family, so if you stay like this, it won't be good for you. So he said I will close my eyes and you can escape from here. So his sympathy and behavior convinced him that he was pro-government. However, it was learned later that Panda Tobgye himself had told that man that Thupten Sangbo is a government official, a monk official, so we cannot treat him like this. So Panda Tobgye told the man to pretend that he escaped without his knowledge. I talked with Thubten Sangbo's younger brother who later became the governor of Lhoka, the Lhoji, about this and although we consider Khambas foolish, however they were able to fool him quite well.

Q

Do you have any more to say about the Panda revolt?

A

(Mr. Sambo) I do not remember anything more. I will talk about it later.

Q

When Reting went to lake Lhamo Latsho [tib. lha mo'i bla mtsho] (the Holy Lake) to see revelations about the reincarnation, who accompanied him?

A

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(Mrs. Taring) For certain, Shakabpa was with him. Shakabpa was not a government officer at that time. He was a chöndze. I remember it clearly because at that time I was hoping that my husband, Taring, would go with them as a photographer, but instead they took Shakabpa who was at that time a young monk.

Q

How is it that during Reting's trouble, Shakabpa was already a Tsipön?

A

(Mrs. Taring) Shakabpa was not a government officer at that time, but thereafter he became a government official very quickly.

(Mr. Taring) I do not remember who accompanied at that time.

(Mrs. Taring) It must have been mentioned in Mr. Kusangtse's [tib. kun bzang rtse] book.

(Mr. Sambo) How many books did Kusangtse write?

(Mrs. Taring) He wrote only one book.

(Mr. Sambo) If he wrote only one book, then it was not mentioned in that book.

Q

How long did this journey take for Reting and his retinue?

A

(Mr. Taring) It might have taken almost a month.

Q

Which route did they take?

A

(Mr. Taring) At about that time, the Tibetan government carried out lot of prayer rituals to find the reincarnation of the 13th Dalai Lama, which included the renovation of important monasteries like the Thandul Yangdul Tsuglagang [tib. mtha' 'dul yang 'dul].

The Thandul Yangdul Tsuglagang relates back to the history of Lhasa. Lhasa is said to have been built on the heart of a sleeping demon. On each of its hands and legs, temples were built to subdue it. So the Tsuglagang that were built on the hands and legs of the demon are called Thangdul-Yangdul. So during that time, all the temples were renovated.

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Samye was one of the most important temples, so when the renovation work at Samye was over, Reting went to Samye personally. Liushar and Shasur were in charge of the renovation work at Samye.

[Note: Mr. Taring pointed to a photo on the wall of his house and said that he took it after the completion of renovation when Reting Rinpoche visited Samye.]

At that time, Sawang Bönshö and Trekhang were the two shape and there were dzasa, senampa, theiji, letshenpa and common officials [tib. dkyus ma]. In fact, all the ranks of the government officials accompanied him.

Q

Was Reting's visit to Samye before his visit to the Holy Lake?

A

(Mr. Taring) It was before the decision was made to send the people to different directions to find the reincarnation of the 13th Dalai Lama. He said that when the renovation work was completed, the oracles Nechung and Tsimara [tib. tsi dmar ba] came and were asked to go into trance. When Nechung was offered tea, he threw it towards the east and again when he was offered a khata he threw that too towards the east. In his prophecy, he said, "My great teacher Thongwa Dönden [the Dalai Lama] might arise from the eastern mountain." [tib. nged kyi slob dpon mthong ba don ldan shar phyogs lhun po'i rtse nas me 'tsher ram]. Going back to the main point once again, I think this prophecy was before Reting went to the Lhamo Latso lake.

[NOTE: I do not think it is correct because I think Reting went to southern Tibet before, and this must be his second time. Also the first time he went to Lhamo Latso it was Trimön who accompanied him.]

Q

Why did they renovate the Samye Monastery? Was it because the monastery was falling into bad condition, or was it just the process of finding the reincarnation of the Dalai Lama?

A

(Mr. Taring) At that time, almost all the temples and monasteries were renovated. Also at that time, the Samye oracle of Tsimara got over excited and ran and talked and then Nechung threw some blessing barley [tib. phyag nas] and Tsimara left his trance and fell.

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I still remember that it was during the autumn. Reting Rinpoche went from Lhasa to Tshal Gungthang [tib. tshal gung thang] and then to Samye. From Samye he went to Trandruk [tib. khra 'brug] and from Trandruk to Sheldrak [tib. shel brag] and then to Jatsa Lhakang and then to Mindröl [tib. smin grol gling] and then to Champaling [tib. byams pa gling] and then to Gongkar [tib. gong dkar] and then to Chushül [tib. chu shur] and to the Longdöl [tib. klon rdol] Hermitage located at the upper part of Nyethang Ratö [tib. mnyes thang rwa stod] which was a beautiful place with pastures and singing birds. Then he finally returned to Lhasa through Tshakhurlinga [tib. tsha khur gling ga].

(Mr. Sambo) During his regency Reting visited Lhoka twice.

(Mrs. Taring) Yes, when Reting went for the completion of Samye, my husband was with him. That was 1937. I remember quite clearly because it was the year I gave birth to my daughter Yangjen [tib. dbyangs can].

Q

What did Reting do for all the monasteries that he visited? Did Nechung give a prophecy at the time of the completion of Samye?

A

(Mr. Taring) Yes, and he made offerings for the government and there were supervisors for performing the rituals [tib. zhabs brtan do dam pa].

Q

Who were the supervisors?

A

(Mr. Taring) Anyway during that time, Bönshö Sawangchemmo and Trekhang Sawangchemmo were there and I also remember Samchola who had not yet become a government officer was accompanying Trekhang Sawangchemmo. He was wearing a red woolen chuba. It was a Tibetan woolen chuba. Then he said that it was the time to visit Lhamo Latso.

(Mr. Sambo) What?

Q

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It was after Phünkhang. Anyway Bönshö was appointed on the basis of rolling a senriy lottery in front of Avalokitesvara. Most of the kalön appointments made by Reting were made in this manner, except Phünkhang's.

A

(Mr. Sambo) Lhalu and Kapshöba were not appointed by the senriy method. That was done during Taktra period.

Q

Who were the Tsipön?

A

(Mrs. Taring) Probably Sambo was one.

(Mr. Sambo) I remember that my father had become a Tsipön, but I do not remember whether he had gone there or not.

(Mrs. Taring) I remember that Sambo was there. He happened to be one of the Tsipön and probably Kapshöba was the second.

(Mr. Taring) When I joined the government service, the Tsipön were Trogawo [tib. khro dga' bo], Lhalu, and Driyul [tib. 'bri yul].

(Mrs. Taring) Sambo, how long was your father a Tsipön?

(Mr. Sambo) It was probably three to four years and then my mother died and he resigned from the Tsipön post. He felt like sort of renouncing the world and after that he resigned from all government posts. He resigned altogether from all the government service, but they relieved him from the post of Tsipön they also gave him the theiji rank.

Q

When they gave your father the theiji rank, was it a promotion?

A

It was a promotion, but one that carried no responsibilities and no power at all.

Q

It was like a tsidrung becoming a khenche.

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A

(Mrs. Taring) Yes. yes. I do remember that your father was greatly worried over the death of your mother and we also heard that he was going to renounce the world and wanted to become a monk and stay on his estate called Kamolung.

(Mr. Sambo) At that time, Reting probably told my father how about changing to become a monk official [tib. skya ser go brjes]. His older brother used be a tsidrunng called Dingkhar. He brought his monk's robe and my father closed the door and wore it, covering his hair with the monk's shawl and looking at the mirror. He said that I thought I will become like this and later he petitioned to not receive the job and also to resign from this lay official [tib. las zhabs chabs cig] job. The government approved the resignation from the Tsipön position and then made him a Theiji.

Q

He got promoted, but without power, right?

A

(Mrs. Taring) It was like the proverb, "Put on the yellow halter." [i.e., promoted without work like horses in Norbulinga without work] right? I heard that he was going to become a tantric practitioner [tib. sngags chen]. Thereafter, he took Yanphel's daughter Yulo [tib. g.yu lo] as his wife and had six kids, four of whom are still living. The son called Bhadur was executed in Tibet.

Q

I heard that Reting, after seeing the vision in the Holy Lake, didn't announce it because it was an inauspicious or black year and people started saying the Reting might not have seen anything. Was that true?

A

(Mrs. Taring) He must have announced it to the Tsondu.